A

LETTER

FROM THE

Right Hon. *W——m P——y*, Eſq;

To the Right Honourable

Sir *R----t W----e*;

With Regard to the Obſervations on the Writtings of the CRAFTSMAN.

WE have now brought theſe Remarks on the *Engliſh Hiſtory*, not only down to Times little remote to our own; but to a Period, when the Monarchy ſettled on a new Foundation, upon which it ſtill continues, and and reſts more firmly than ever, at this Hour. The Obſervations therefore, which remain to be made, in order to illuſtrate what hath been advanced, concerning the *Spirit of Liberty*, and the *Spirit of Faction*, will, for theſe Reaſons, be the more oppoſite, the more affecting, and by Conſequence the more uſeful, but, for theſe very Reaſons likewiſe, it is probable, that they will become the Occaſions of louder Complaints, and of more impertinent Clamour—We ſhall be ſincerely ſorry for this; becauſe we look on the *Alarm*, which hath been taken at our Endeavours to revive the *Spirit*, and to confirm and propagate the *Doctrines of Liberty*, in a Country, where *Liberty* is ſtill avowed, and under a Government, eſtabliſhed on the *Principles of Liberty*, as a moſt ſuſpicious and melancholly Symptom. But the ſtronger this Symptom appears, the more incumbent We ſhall think it upon us, to purſue the honeſt Deſign, to which We have devoted ourſelves with Conſtancy and Vigour.

The ſhameleſs *Crew*, who write againſt their *Country*, as they would write againſt their *God*, for Hire, ſhall have little Regard from us. The ſcandalous Licenſe, with which they have preſumed to draw *odious Parallels*, and the Impudence, with which They have imputed theſe *Parallels* to us, have been abundantly expoſed already. The few, the very few Things, which they have alledged in Point of *Fact* or *Argument*, have been often anſwer'd; perhaps too often, conſidering how little Weight they carried with them, and how little Impreſſion They were capable of making, on the Underſtandings even of *Thoſe*, who had *other Reaſons* for inclining to that Side of the Queſtion.

Queſtion. The Ribaldry, which theſe Scriblers employ, hath been, and will continue to be deſpiſed, not anſwer'd. It cannot be expected, that we ſhould take Notice of every *little, frivolous, childiſh Declamation*, which appears in publick, however ſome Perſons may demean themſelves by pretending to admire them. The *Menaces*, affectedly and inſolently thrown out on *one Side*, and the *Flattery*, ſervilely offer'd on the *other*, are equally Objects of our Contempt; and if We take a little Notice of the *former*, once for all, before We proceed any farther in theſe *Remarks*, it is purely becauſe we cannot underſtand them to be the Language of *theſe Writers*. When They talk in this Style, They ſpeak the Language of HIM, who guides their Pens, and who is known to reward their Labours. To *Him* therefore, it may not be improper to addreſs our ſelves in the following Manner.

'The *Perſons*, whom you threaten, Sir, neither value your 'Favour, nor fear your Anger. Whenever you attempt any 'Act of Power againſt any of them, you ſhall find that you 'have to do with Men, who know they have not offended the 'Law; and therefore truſt They have not offended the *King*; 'who know They are ſafe, as long as the *Laws* and *Liberties* 'of their Country are ſo; and who are ſo little deſirous of be'ing ſafe any longer, that they would be the firſt to bury 'themſelves in the Ruins of the *Britiſh* Conſtitution, if *You* or 'any *M———r*, as deſperate as *You*, ſhould be able to deſtroy 'it. But let us ask, on this Occaſion, what *You* are, who thus 'preſume to threaten?—Are you not *One*, whoſe Meaſure 'of *Folly* and *Iniquity* is full; who can neither hold, nor quit 'his Power with Impunity; and over whoſe Head, the long-'gathering Cloud of national Vengeance is ready to burſt? '—Is it not Time for *You*, Sir, inſtead of threatening to at'tack *others*, to conſider how ſoon you may be attacked *your'ſelf*——— How many Crimes may be charged upon *You* and '*Yours*, which almoſt every Man can prove; and how many 'more are ready to ſtart into Light, as ſoon as the Power, by 'which you now conceal them, ſhall determine?——When 'next you meditate Revenge on your *Adverſaries*, remember 'this Truth. *The* LAWS *muſt be deſtroy'd, before* They *can ſuf'fer, or* You *eſcape*.

Let us now return to our Subject.—In the early Days of our Government, after the *Norman* Invaſion, the Commons of *England* were rather formidable in their *collective*, than conſiderable in their *repreſentative* Body, by their *Numbers* in extraordinary Emergencies, rather than by their *Weight* in the ordinary Courſe of Government. In later Days, they began to acquire ſome of this *Weight* by Degrees. They repreſented *Grievances*, They gave, or refuſed *Subſidies*; and they exercis'd, in a regular, ſenatorial Manner, the Powers lodged in them by the Conſtitution; but ſtill they did not obtain the

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intire Weight, till they were wholly emancipated; and they were not ſo, till the *great Change*, which we are ſpeaking of, happened. Before this Time, they had too much of the Dependency of *Tenants*, and the *King*, the *Nobility* and the *Clergy* had too much of the Superiority of *Landlords*. This Dependency of the *Commons* added to That, which the *Crown* frequently found Means of creating, either by influencing their *Elections*, or by corrupting their *Repreſentatives*, (notwithſtanding all the *Proviſions* made againſt it, which we have touch'd in a former Paper) kept this Part of the Legiſlature in ſuch a State, as made it unable fully to anſwer the End of its Inſtitution; and the Syſtem of our Government was by Conſequence, in this Reſpect, defective.

Could *Henry* VIIth have found Means, as he reduced the *Nobility* lower, to have hinder'd the *Commons* from riſing higher; could he have opened a Way to the Diminution of the Property of the *Lords*, and have prevented that Increaſe of the ſame Property amongſt the *Commons*, to which, on the contrary, he gave Occaſion, and which Time and Accidents conſpired to bring about; the *Ballance* of this Government would have been totally loſt, though the *outward Forms* of it had been preſerved. Our *Liberty* would have been loſt by Conſequence, and our *Kings*, with an *Houſe of Lords* and an *Houſe of Commons*, and all the Appearances of *limited Monarchs*, might have been as arbitrary as thoſe Princes are, who govern Countries, where no ſuch Conſtitution prevails. The Reaſon of This will appear plain to Thoſe, who remember what hath been obſerved, in ſome of our former Papers, that a *dependent Exerciſe of the Powers lodged in the two Houſes of Parliament*, will endanger, and may, more effectually than any other Expedient, deſtroy *Liberty*; and that the Preſervation of our Freedom is no Way to be ſecured, but by a *free and independent Exerciſe of theſe Powers*: Now *ſuch an Exerciſe* could not have continued, much leſs have been improved, if *Henry* the VIIth had been able, at the ſame Time, to weaken his *Nobility*, and to keep his *Commons* from acquiring new Strength. But This was impracticable, at leaſt, it was not attempted. *Henry* the VIIth haſten'd to the Cure of that Evil, which preſſed him moſt, the Power of the *Nobility*, as his Son ſoon afterwards effectually reduced the exorbitant Power of the *Clergy*; and in pulling down theſe Powers, which, as they were conſtituted and had been exercis'd, hurt the *Crown* more than they ſerved the *People*, theſe Princes became the Inſtruments of raiſing *another Power*, which is the beſt, if not the ſole effectual Barrier againſt Uſurpations of illegal, and Abuſes of legal Prerogatives; and which, at the ſame Time, can never be apply'd to do any real Hurt to the *Crown*, unleſs in Caſes where it is bent, and forced to do this Hurt by the *Crown* it ſelf, in the firſt Place, againſt the natural Tendency and Direction of it.

This

This Increaſe of the Property of the *Commons*, by taking off from them a *conſtant Dependancy* of one Sort, and by rendering them leſs obnoxious to an *occaſionall Dependancy* of another, gave greater Dignity, and added greater Weight, in the Ballance of Government, to their *repreſentative Body*. The *Houſe of Commons* became more powerful, without the Attribution of any new Powers, and purely by the different Manner, in which their *Independency*, the Effects of their *Property*, enabled them to exerciſe the ſame Powers, which they enjoyed before. A Concert with a *few great Lords*, and a *few*, *leading Prelates*, was no longer ſufficient to guide the Senſe of *Parliament*, and to eſtabliſh the Meaſures of *Government* No, not even in Caſes, where this Concert might be extended to ſome of the *Commons* Themſelves. Intrigue and Cabal became unneceſſary, when the *national Intereſt* was wiſely purſued; and ineffectual, when it was not. The Way was open to gain the *Parliament*, by gaining the *Nation*; but to impoſe on the *Nation* by gaining the *Parliament*, was hard; for the *Weight without Doors* determin'd, in thoſe Days, the *Weight within*. The ſame Cauſes, which render'd the *Houſe of Commons* more conſiderable to the *Court*, to the *Nobility*, to the *Clergy*, to the *Commons* themſelves, render'd likewiſe the whole Body of the *Commons* of more Importance to *Thoſe*, who were choſen to repreſent them. Beſides which, the Frequency of *new Elections*, which was deemed an Advantage, as long as the Service was deemed an honourable Burthen, gave the Nation frequent Opportunities of modelling the *repreſentative Body*, according to the Intereſts and Inclinations of the *collective Body*. From hence it follow'd, that That Credit and Influence in the *Nation*, which can only be acquired and preſerved by adhering to the *national Intereſt*, became the ſole Means of maintaining a laſting Credit and Influence in the *Houſe of Commons*; upon which the Harmony of Government, and the Happineſs of *Prince* and *People*, depended more than ever.

Thus were we brought back, in Times very diſtant, and in Circumſtances very different, to the *Principles of Government*, which had prevailed amongſt our *Saxon* Anceſtors, before they left *Germany*. Whatever particular Preeminences or Powers were veſted in the *principal Men*, the great Affairs of State were directed by the *whole Body of the Nation*——*De* minoribus *Principes*, *de* majoribus *omnes*.

Such were the natural Effects of this *new Settlement*; and thus our *limited Monarchy* became capable of as much Perfection, as Wiſdom and favourable Accidents can communicate to any human Inſtitution; for can We raiſe our Ideas of this Kind of Perfection, higher than ordering the Diſtribution of *Property* and *Power* in ſuch a Manner, that the Privileges of the *People*, and the Prerogatives of the *Crown* cannot be taken away, unleſs with their *own Conſent*, or by their *own Fault*?

Now

Now to this Point of Perfection was the Conſtitution of our Government brought, and farther it could not be brought: becauſe it is impoſſible to ſecure either *Prince* or *People* againſt *Themſelves*, or againſt the Effects of their *own Conduct*.

One Part of what hath been ſaid upon this Subject will not, I think, be diſputed. The *other*, perhaps, may ſeem a Paradox; and a Settlement, which render'd our Goverment more *democratical*, will not be readily allowed to have been advantageous to the *Crown*, though it muſt be allowed to have been ſo to the *People*.——Let us examine therefore whether it was really ſo or not.

In all *limited Monarchies*, and we are not ſpeaking of any other, the *Power* of preſerving *theſe Limitations* muſt be plac'd ſomewhere. The Queſtion therefore is, whether it can be plac'd more advantageouſly, even for the *Crown* as well as the *People*, than in the *whole Body of the Nation*.

Whilſt the *Commons* had not *Property* enough to have any Share in *this Power*, the ſole Check, which could be oppoſed to the Incroachments of the *Crown*, was the Power of the *Barons* and of the *Clergy*. But theſe two Orders of Men had their particular Intereſts, frequently oppoſite to *each other* and to Thoſe of the *People*, as well as to Thoſe of the *Crown*; ſo that they were not only very incapable of forming a ſecure Barrier to *Liberty*, but their Power became terrible and dangerous to the *Crown* it ſelf. They ſlided eaſily into *Faction*. They often incroached on the *Prince*'s Authority, whilſt They reſiſted his Incroachments, real or pretended, on their own Privileges; and under the plauſible Veil of *Law*, or *Goſpel*, private Ambition had a greater ſhare than publick Liberty in their Conteſts. It is true, that during theſe Conteſts *Magna-Charta* was ſigned and confirmed; and the Condition of the People, in Point of *Liberty*, very much improved. But This was the accidental Effect of the Conteſts between the *Kings*, the *Barons* and the *Clergy*, as We have remarked in ſpeaking of thoſe Times, and not the natural Effect of the *Property* and *Power*, lodged in the *Barons* and the *Clergy*. The *Commons* were courted by all Sides, becauſe they were wanted by all. Had they been Bubbles enough to look on the *Nobility* and *Clergy* as the proper Guardians of *Liberty*, and to have adhered to Them accordingly, they might indeed have avoided being Slaves to their *Kings*, but they would have render'd both their *Kings* and *Themſelves* little leſs than Slaves to their *Temporal* and *Spiritual Lords*.

After the Reigns of *Edward* the Iſt. and *Edward* the IIId. *Power* came to be better poized, and our Government took a more regular Form. The Prerogatives of our *Kings*, the Priviledges of our *Nobility*, the Authority and Immunity of the *Church*, and Rights of the *People* were more aſcertain'd; and yet, after this Time, the ſame Obſervations will hold good

good in a very great Degree. It is certain that the vaſt over-Ballance of *Property* and *Power*, which ſtill continued in the *Nobility* and *Clergy*, inſtead of preventing, ſoftening, or ſhortening the Calamities, which follow'd, help'd to form and maintain *thoſe Factions*, which began, renewed, and fomented the civil Wars of *York* and *Lancaſter*, as well as the wicked Conduct of *Richard* II. and the weak Conduct of *Henry* VI. Redreſs of Grievance and ſufficient Security againſt them for the future might have ſatisfied the *People*, if They had been left to Themſelves; but nothing leſs than Revolution of Government could ſatisfie the *Factions*, into which the great Men were divided, and into which they divided the Nation, by their Influence over the *People*, and by the Advantages, which the ill Conduct of the *Yorkiſts* and *Lancaſtrians* gave to each other.

Thus We ſee how unſafely for the *Crown*, as well as inſecurely for the People, that *Property* and *Power*, which is neceſſary to preſerve the *Limitations* of our Monarchy was placed, before the Time when that great *Change* in the one and the other happen'd, which makes the Subject of this Diſcourſe —But as ſoon as this *Change* did happen, the *Crown* was no longer, expoſed to the ſame Miſchiefs.

When the *little Power*, which *Henry the Fourth of France* had in the Town of *Rochelle*, was objected to Him, He made an Anſwer worthy of his heroick Spirit. *I do*, ſaid He, *all I deſire to do there, in doing nothing but what I ought* — This *Moderation of Temper* is, in all Governments, the beſt and in *limitted Monarchies*, the only ſure and durable Foundation of *Power*. By preventing Jealouſy in the *People* of the *Prince*, it takes away all Advantages againſt his Government from *Faction*; and the more watchful the *People* are over their *Liberties*, the more ſenſible will they be of this *Moderation*, and the more grateful for it. *Faction* proceeds always withous *Reaſon*; but it can hardly ever ſucceed without *Pretence*, and ſufficient Pretence will hardly be found under ſuch a Government.

When a Prince, who manifeſts this *Moderation* of Temper, purſues the true Intereſt of his *People*, and ſuffers no *other Intereſt* to come into any Degree of Competition with it, far from being the Object of their *Jealouſy*, He will be the principal Object of their *Affection*; and if he joins to this Character of *Goodneſs*, That of *Ability*, He will be the principal Object of their *Confidence* likewiſe. Theſe are the ſtrongeſt Chains, by which a People can be bound to their *Prince*; eaſier indeed, but far ſtronger than Thoſe of *Adamant*, by which *Dionyſius* the elder boaſted that He had ſecured the Tyranny of *Sycracuſe* to his Son; *Force, Fear, a multitude of Troops, and a Guard of ten thouſand Barbarians*——A Prince, who eſtabliſhes his Government on the Principles of *Affection*, hath every Thing to hope and nothing to fear from his People. A Prince, who eſtabliſhes his Government on any *other Principals*, acts in Con-

Contradiction to the very End of his Inſtitution. What Objection therefore could be made, even on the Part of the *Crown*, to a Settlement of *Property* and *Power*, which put the Guardianſhip of *Liberty* into ſuch Hands as never did nor ever will invade the Prerogative and Authority of the *Crown*, whilſt they are employed to thoſe Purpoſes, for which alone they were intruſted; It is confeſs'd that if a Prince ſhould attempt to eſtabliſh his Government on any *other Principles* than Theſe; if He ſhould chuſe to depend rather on deceiving, corrupting, or forcing his People, than on gaining their *Affection* and *Confidence*: He might feel the Weight of their *Property* and *Power* very, heavy in the Scale againſt Him. But then it muſt be confeſs'd likewiſe that in ſuch a Caſe, this Oppoſition of the *People* would be juſt; and that the *Prince* not the *People*, would be anſwerable to Himſelf and his Family, to God and to Man, for all the ill Conſequences, which might follow.

We hope, that We have ſaid nothing, in order to ſhow the Excellency of our *Conſtitution*, as it ſettled about the Time of Queen *Elizabeth*, which is not agreeable to Reaſon; and ſure We are that the Truth of theſe general Propoſitions will be confirm'd by the particular Examples, which are to follow. ——The Reign of Queen *Elizabeth* will be one continued Proof that the Power of preſerving the *Limitation* of Monarchy cannot be placed better, for a *good* and *wiſe Prince*; than in the *whole Body of the People*; and that the *Spirit of Liberty* will give greater Strength, as well as procure greater Eaſe to the Government of ſuch a Prince, than any abſolute Monarch can hope to find in the moſt *abject Spirit*, which Principles of *blind Submiſſion* and *paſſive Obedience* are capable of inſpiring.—The *Reigns*, immediately ſucceeding *This*, will be one continued Proof, that whenever the Power of the *People* hath been excercis'd againſt the *Crown*, it hath been owing primarily to the weak Management and Obſtinacy of the *Court*, and to the unhappy Choice, which *thoſe Princes* made of governing by *Factions*, in Oppoſition to the Senſe and Intereſt of the *Nation*. From whence it will follow that the great Calamities, which befel our Country, in the Middle of the laſt Century, are unjuſtly charged on the *Spirit of Liberty*, or on the *Nature of the* Britiſh *Conſtitution of Government*.

P. S. Letters from *Ireland* confirm our former Advices, that the *French Officers*, who came to raiſe Recruits in that Kingdom, with the Appearance of no ſmall Confidence of Support and Succeſs in that Service, are return'd to *France* with out any Men, very much chagrin'd at being diſappainted of the Encouragement, which They were *promiſed*, or *expected*.

Our *extraordinary Paper*, upon this Subject, ſeemed to ſtrike the *Penſionary Writers* dumb. At leaſt, They continued ſilent above a Fortnight; but at laſt, They have thought fit to reſume

ſume the Diſpute, when it can be of no Uſe; for the End of our Writings is fully anſwered; and it is unneceſſary to trouble the Publick any farther on that Head. We ſhall therefore leave it to *Thoſe*, who may think Themſelves concerned to juſtify the honeſt and laudable Intention, of adding ſuch a Security to the *Proteſtant Succeſſion*, to write on without Contradiction.

As nobody can think that *theſe Officers* made ſuch a wild Attempt without ſome Aſſurances of a more favourable Reception; ſo We have Reaſon to believe that his Majeſty's own wiſe and unſhaken Reſolution had cruſhed this *pernicious Project*, before our Thoughts were publiſhed; but as We could not be ſenſible of This, and as the Deſign of our Writing proceeded from an inflexible Zeal for the Intereſt of his *illuſtrious Family*, ſo We are not a little proud in finding our Reaſonings, upon this Head, confirm'd by the *Royal Opinion*; which it is to be hoped, will check the Preſumtion and Inſolence of *Thoſe*, who firſt gave Countenance to ſuch a *Project*, and make Them ſomewhat more cautious, for the future, of engaging in *little momentary Expedients* to ſupport Themſelves, at the Expence of the *King* and the *Kingdom*

This Inſtance of his Majeſty's tender Concern for our future Quiet and Society at home, gives us the ſtrongeſt Aſſurances of the Advantages, which We may juſtly expect from his ſuperior Knowledge to *ſome Men* about Him; and We may promiſe ourſelves, that the true Intereſt of theſe Kingdoms will be ſettled upon the moſt ſolid Foundation, when the *Royal Judgement* exerts itſelf independently, of the weak or corrupt Views and Advices of *others*.

There